BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

FUR MANAGEMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge is located on the narrow strip of beach between Back Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The refuge also encompasses a portion of the islands in the bay and lies within the city limits of Virginia Beach. The bay marshes have been trapped since the first settlers arrived in this country and the Back Bay area has traditionally been an outstanding area for waterfowling. The muskrat population has decreased almost steadily since the refuge was established, with the exception of 1963 and 1969 when the population on the refuge nearly tripled. The change of holding one impoundment at winter water level throughout the summer has apparently resulted in some concentration of the refuge muskrat population in the impounded marsh. The population of the refuge is estimated at 2,500 muskrats and 2,000 mutria with the majority of the animals located within the 800 acres of impoundments.

Part I. NELATION OF FUR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM TO REFUGE OBJECTIVES

A primary objective of the refuge is to provide all that is necessary for the preservation of rere or endangered species such as the Southern Bald Hagle, Ipswich sparrow and the osprey, which are found on the refuge during certain periods of the year. The trapping of fur bearers should have no effect on any of these species.

Another primary responsibility is to provide feeding, resting and nesting habitat for migratory waterfowl. The dikes constructed on the refuge to impound approximately 800 acres of beach marsh are designed to provide some of the above listed waterfowl needs. The trapping of muskrats and nutria could affect the character of the marsh by reducing the number of animals that remove emergent vegetation and keep the marsh open for waterfowl use. It is intended to carry over approximately 40% of the muskrat population for emergent vegetation control. For the past two years one day a week has been utilized to fill cave—ins and washouts resulting from burrowing in the dikes. The burrowing of muskrat and nutria poses a threat to these sand dikes requiring some control to reduce this hazard.

Other refuge objectives involve management of the natural resources on the refuge for optimus wildlife population, habitat preservation and management, and wildlife oriented recreation. The trapping program is designed to take approximately 60% of

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the muskrat and nutria in the impoundments and this should not interfere with the above listed objectives. Trapping will be permitted on the entire refuge. The attached map indicates the area

Part II. PROGRAM POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS

It has been determined that a surplus of muskrat, nutria and raccoon are present on the refuge and 50 CFR 31.16 authorizes trapping on wildlife refuges where trapping has been approved. Refuge personnel and trappers shall secure and comply with the provisions of the Federal Permit issued for that purpose. This permit shall specify terms and conditions of trapping activity and the rates of charges or division of pelts, hides or carcasses. The permittee shall also have in his possession the required state license and shall comply with all state regulations.

Refuge personnel will maintain constant surveillance of the program to assure conformance with regulations and to assure proper handling of refuge furs.

Part III. MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The fur management program will be conducted in accordance with the annual trapping proposal which is approved by the Refuge Supervisor. The 1987 program will be conducted in accordance with Attachment 1 to this plan, which is the complete information packet which is sent to all trappers. In the case of any discrepancy between this plan and the annual program, the program will be

- Species Seven primary fur bearing species occur on the refuge which are considered in this plan. The target species are raccoons, muskrat and nutria. If fox, mink, otter, or opossum are accidentally trapped and the animals cannot be released without serious damage, their hides may be retained by the refuge or, with approval of manager, retained by the trapper. Since the primary species to be taken are muskrat, nutria and raccoon, trap size shall be limited to number 2 size or smaller. Baiting of traps will be permitted only upon approval by the refuge manager.
- State Seasons The trapping program will begin and end according to state seasons and as modified by refuge needs outlined in the annual program.
- Waterfowl Disturbance It is felt that one trapper can accomplish the desired goals around the refuge impoundments, and if this should at any time cause excessive disturbance the trapping operation will be stopped.

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- D. Weather Conditions Weather conditions should not affect the program operation. It is anticipated that the daily checks can be accomplished in all types of weather without any serious adverse effects.
- E. <u>Water Levels</u> Winter water levels in the impoundments are to be kept stable during the trapping season and only minor fluctuations are anticipated. The bay water levels usually fluctuate drastically however these fluctuations should not seriously affect the program.

Part IV. PRESCRIBED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

A. <u>Trapping Units</u> - Trapping may be permitted in impoundments, along ditches and dikes, and on marsh islands. The specific trapping units are as follows:

Unit I - Impoundments and adjacent marshes

Unit II - Long Island and vicinity

Unit III - Great Cove and vicinity

Unit IV - Ragged Island and vicinity

See attached map, page 7.

B. Fur Bearer Populations - Estimates of the animal populations are to be made annually to determine if there is a harvestable population. Under normal conditions it is estimated that 1,000 muskrats should be retained and all nutria and raccoon that can be trapped should be removed. The following muskrat populations should be maintained: Impoundment A - 400, Impoundment B - 300, and Impoundment C - 300. Trapping will not be permitted on impoundments that has the above listed population or less. The other fur bearers are few in number and will not be trapped intentionally. Strict monitoring of the annual methods and results will be conducted, especially concerning the catch of mink, otter and waterfowl. If standard long spring or jump traps are too non-selective, the conibear, box, or haveahart types will be required. Annual Fur Management Program will be prepared and submitted well in advance of the trapping season.

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C. <u>Trapper Selection</u>

- 1. By October 15, the Refuge Manager will make an appropriate news release containing the general provisions for applying for trapping units. Applications will be based on a bid system.
- 2. Specific dates and hours for inspection of the trapping units will be designated annually by the Refuge Manager.
- 3. Trapping permit application forms (3-2001), maps of the units and general trapping regulations will be available at the refuge office from 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekdays from October 15 until the permit application closing date in December.
- 4. The Refuge Manager will designate special conditions for the specific units and provide this information with the trapping permit application. These conditions may be:
 - a. What species may be trapped.
 - b. Points of ingress and egress.
 - c. Proximity of traps to public use roads and trails.
- 5. An individual may bid on as many units as he desires. The highest bidder for each unit will be awarded that unit, however, normally only one unit per trapper will be awarded. Any units not awarded may be readvertised at the discretion of the Refuge Manager. Bid opening will be as specified in the annual program. A tie bid on a unit will be resolved by an immediate drawing by the Refuge Manager.
- 6. A deposit of \$25.00 will be required with each application. If a unit is awarded, this \$25.00 will be applied to the bid payment. The deposit should be a Cashier's Check, Money Order, or Certified Check made out to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Deposits of all unsuccessful applications will be returned to the applicant.

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- 7. The successful bidder on each unit must personally trap that unit. He may have one helper with him. Violation of any refuge regulation by the helper will reflect on the conditions of the permit in exactly the same manner as a violation by the permittee. In the event the permittee is sick or a personal emergency arises, the Refuge Manager will be notified and the helper may be authorized to check the traps alone.
- 8. Traps will be Conibear 220 or smaller. All traps will be checked at least once every 24 hours except when iced in. Failure to tend traps as required will be cause for immediate revocation of the permit, and said person's applications for future permits will not be accepted within three (3) years.
- All trapping activities on the refuge will be conducted between one-half hour before sunrise and one-half hour after sunset.
- 10. The refuge trapping season will be within the state season framework, and as specified in the annual program.
- 11. Only muskrat, nutria, and raccoon will be trapped. Other species of wildlife that are found alive in the trap by the permittee will be immediately liberated. Any wildlife found dead or injured in the traps will immediately be reported to the Refuge Manager or his representative. Any captures other than the target species will be reported on the weekly reports or permit revocation will result. The Refuge Manager, at his discretion may permit the trapper to retain state-legal, non-target furbearers.
- 12. The government can assume no responsibility in case of theft of equipment or animals.
- 13. Any successful applicant who, without an acceptable reason, defaults or requests a refund becomes ineligible to take part in any refuge trapping for the next three (3) years.
- 14. The trapper report forms (form BB-4) issued to the permittee will be submitted to the refuge office each week. They will be filled out completely. Failure to do the above will be cause for revocation of the permit.

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15. Any trespass or illegal activities observed by the permittee will be reported to the Refuge Manager, or his representative, as soon as possible. At no time will the permittee try to apprehend the person(s).

Part V. PHYSICAL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT USE REQUIREMENTS

No new facilities are needed.

Equipment needed would include:

- Office equipment for administrative paperwork.
- One 4-wheel drive vehicle for survey, patrol and boat launching.
- One outboard boat, trailer and motor for survey and patrol.
- d. Binoculars.
- e. Foul weather gear.

All the above equipment is used in other management activities and no purchases are needed in the near future.

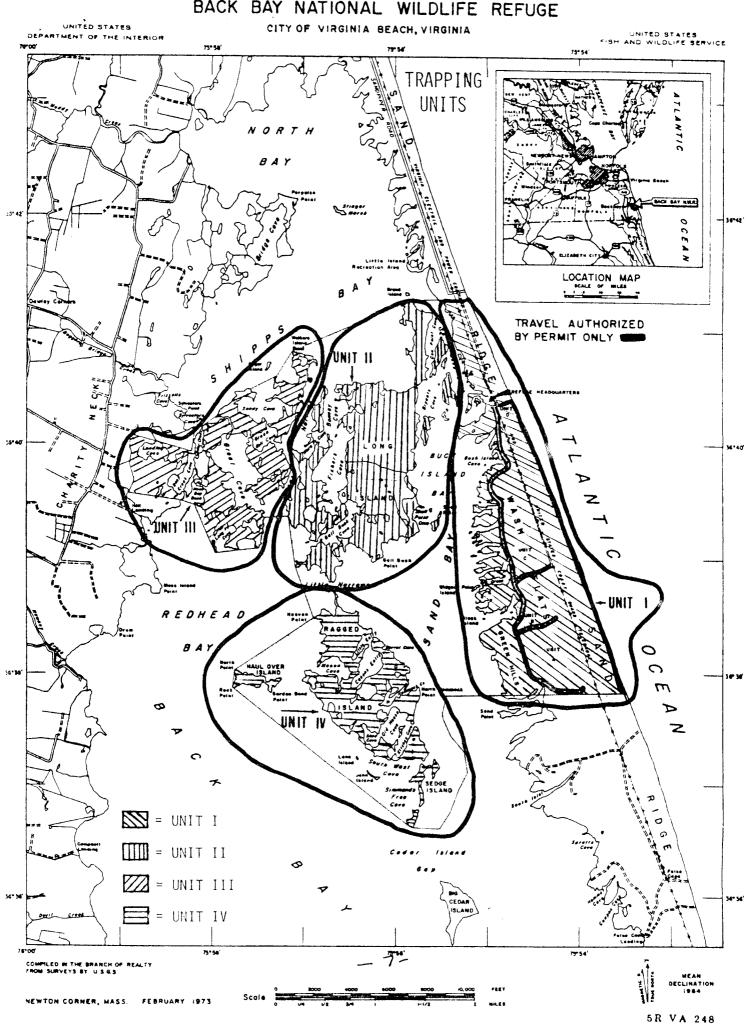
Part VI. FUNDS AND MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS

 .		Cost	Work	Days
Furbearer scent post survey	\$	360.00	4	J
Fall Population Survey	\$	90.00	1	
Plan and Program Administration	\$	450.00	5	
Equipment Maintenance and Supplies		300.00	0	
Supervision and Law Enforcement Patro	1\$	450.00	5	
TOTAL	\$1	1650.00	15	

No additional manpower is required to administer this program under the existing staff at this station.

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BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE



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This report must be on plated and turned in to the refuse by A:00 FM each Monday.



Attachment #1
TRAPPING INFORMATION PACKET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE PLUM TREE ISLAND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE 4005 SANDPIPER ROAD P. O. BOX 6286 VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA 23456

December 16, 1987

Dear Trapper:

Enclosed is an information packet relating to trapping at Bay National Wildlife Refuge. The packet includes the following information.

- 1. Instructions for Prospective Trappers
- 2. Map of the Trapping Units
- 3. Refuge Trapping Regulations
- 4. State Trapping Regulations
- 5. Bid Form
- 6. Return Envelope

Please read the enclosed information very carefully and be certain that you understand the program prior to bidding. particular attention to the sheets entitled, "INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROSPECTIVE TRAPPERS". If you wish to bid, you must do so in accordance with the guidelines included in the attached information.

Please send your bid form, along with your deposit(s) in the envelope provided to:

> Trapping Bid Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge P. O. Box 6286 Virginia Beach, Virginia 23456

> > Sincerely.

Anthony D. Leger

Refuge Manager

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
PLUM TREE ISLAND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
4005 SANDPIPER ROAD
P. O. BOX 6286
VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA 23456

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROSPECTIVE TRAPPERS

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia Beach, Virginia will be open for the trapping of muskrat, nutria, and raccoon in 1987. Unit I will be open to trapping from January 5, 1987 to March 10, 1987. Units II, III, and IV will open on January 18 and close on March 10, 1987. Raccoon trapping in all Units will end on February 28, 1987.

- 1. All four (4) trapping units are designated on the attached map. Trappers wishing to inspect units must obtain the permission of the Refuge Manager prior to such inspections taking place. Inspection of Units II, III, and IV, which are only accessible by boat is permitted during daylight hours only. Inspection of Unit I dikes and marshes may be done on foot only, between December 21 and 30, 1986. Prior approval to enter refuge impoundments is required.
- 2. Refuge prescribed burning may be conducted in various locations throughout the units before and possibly during the traping season. No burning by other than refuge personnel is authorized.
- 3. Experienced trappers, 18 years of age and older, are invited to submit a sealed bid in the name of one individual, and bid on as many units as he/she desires. Normally, no more than one (1) Unit may be awarded to any individual. An individual may only be awarded more than one unit if he is the sole bidder on that unit. Units will be awarded based on the highest bid. The order of award shall be as follows: The highest overall bid received will be awarded, followed by the next highest winning bid, etc., followed by units which receive only one bid. The Refuge Manager may award units which are not bid on to the highest overall bidder for the minimum bid price. If the highest bidder refuses the unit, the next highest bidder may be offered the unit, etc. The Manager retains the authority to readvertise any unit which is not bid on.
- 4. A minimum bid (deposit) of \$25.00 is required for <u>each</u> unit. Bidding is accomplished by submitting the completed (front and back) Application for Refuge Fur Trapping Permit (Form 3-2001). If a unit is awarded, the deposit is applied to the total bid payment. The deposit must be a Cashier's Check, Money Order or Certified Check made out to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

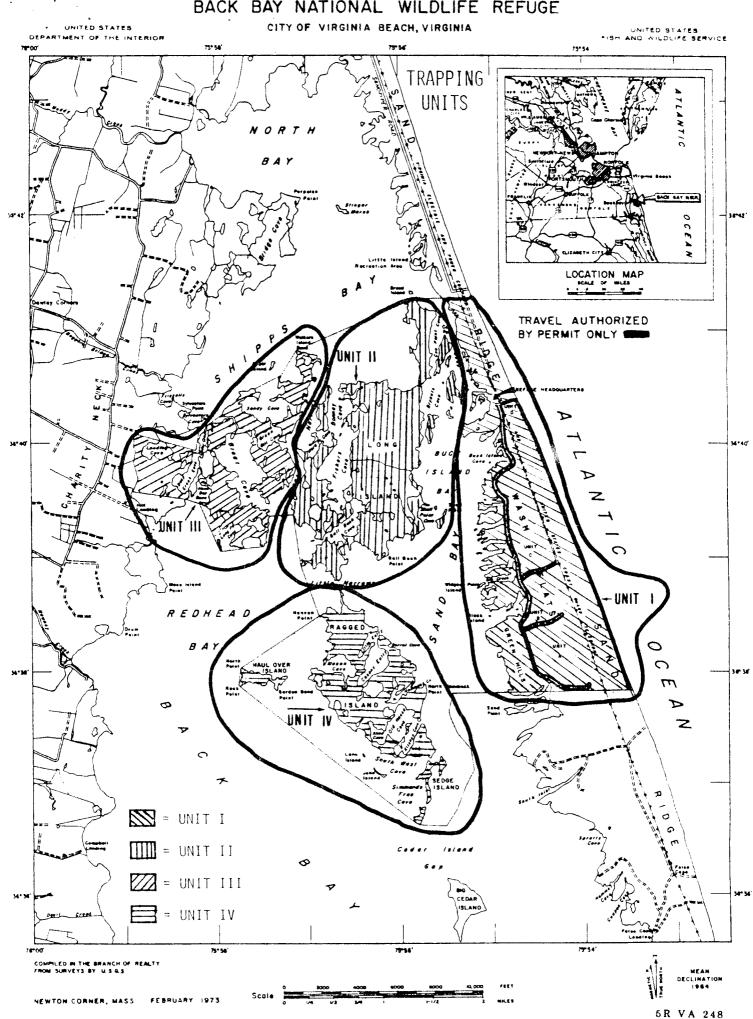
- Deposits of all unsuccessful bids will be returned to the Applicant after the bid opening.
 - 5. Successful bidders must contact the refuge office and pay the remainder of their trapping fee within one week (7 days) of award, and prior to beginning trapping operations on their unit. Successful bidders will be required to sign a Special Use Permit which serves as a formal contract. The trapper is bound by all permit conditions.
 - 6. Trappers who fail to execute their permit within 7 days of bid award will forfeit their deposit and rights to trap the unit.
 - 7. Bids must be received at the Back Bay Refuge office no later than 1:00 PM on January 5, 1987. Bids may be delivered in person or mailed to the envelope provided. Send bids to:

Trapping Bid Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge P. O. Box 6286 Virginia Beach, VA 23456

- 8. Bids must be sealed and will be opened at 1:00 PM January 5, 1987. Interested individuals are invited to attend the bid opening at the refuge office.
- 9. All bids must be signed to be valid.
- 10. The trapper(s) awarded Units II, III, and IV will be allowed to leave one boat tied to the refuge dock for overnight storage, at the trapper's own risk. The refuge will not be responsible for any thefts or losses. While using refuge facilities for overnight storage, the boat must be used only for setting and checking traps, and not for activities such as fishing and hunting. Use of the craft for other activities may result in forfeiture of trapping privileges and fees.
- 11. Any violation of State or Federal regulations may result in immediate revocation of all refuge trapping permits, forfeiture of bid, and/or suspension from further refuge trapping for the next three (3) trapping seasons.
- 12. The successful bidder on each unit must personally trap that unit. He/she may have one helper with them. Violation of a regulation by the helper will reflect on the conditions of the permit in exactly the same manner as a violation by the permittee. In the event the permittee is sick or a personal emergency arises, the helper may be authorized to check the traps alone by the Refuge Manager, upon request and submission of proper documentation.
- 13. All trap checks must be conducted between one-half hour before sunrise and one-half hour after sunset.

- .14. Traps must be Conibear 220 or smaller, and will have the trappers identification mark or tag on them. Trap location must be identified (with flagging, etc.). No other trap types are allowed.
 - 15. Only muskrat, nutria, and raccoon will be trapped. Other species of wildlife that are found alive and unharmed in the trap by the permittee will be immediately liberated. Any protected species found dead or mortally injuried will immediately be turned over to the Refuge Manager or his representative. Other statelegal furbearers, which are incidentally trapped, must be immediately reported to the refuge manager, who will decide on disposition.
 - 16. The government assumes no responsibility in case of theft of equipment or animals.
 - 17. Questions concerning the trapping program should be directed to the refuge office. Please call (804) 721-2412 between $8:00~{\rm AM}$ and $4:00~{\rm PM}$ weekdays.

BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE PLUM TREE ISLAND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE 4005 SANDPIPER ROAD P. O. BOX 6286 VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA 23456

REFUGE TRAPPING REGULATIONS

- 1. The successful bidder must personally trap his unit. Individual trappers are required to designate at least one helper who can tend the traps in an emergency. No helper can trap alone except in an emergency situation (for example, if a bidder is sick or disabled and cannot tend his traps) -- and subject to the Refuge Manager's approval.
- 2. Only conibear-type traps size 220 or smaller are authorized.
- 3. Trappers must hold a valid VA state trapping license and are subject to all state and federal rules applicable to trapping.
- 4. All traps must be checked <u>once every 24 hours</u> except during extreme tides or weather.
- 5. All protected species trapped must be turned in to the refuge.
- 6. All state-legal, non-target furbearers which are incidentally trapped must be immediately reported to the Refuge Manager, who will determine their disposition.
- 7. Permittees must submit a Weekly Trapping Report each week. Forms are available at the Refuge office.
- 8. Any permittee who violates trapping laws or regulations on the Refuge is subject to forfeiture of his trapping privilege without reimbursement, and may be suspended from Refuge trapping for the next three(3) seasons.
- 9. Any illegal activities observed on the refuge must be reported to the Refuge Manager within 24 hours.
- 10. The trapping season dates for Unit I are; January 5, 1987 to March 10, 1987. Trapping in Unit I will be limited to dike areas only from January 5 to January 17. The trapper in Unit I must trap the dike area prior to trapping the pool marsh areas.
- 11. The trapping season dates for Units II, III, and IV are January 18 to March 10, 1987.
- 12. Raccoon trapping will end on February 28, 1987.

Summary of Virginia Trapping Regulations

Beaver and Otter

December 15-February 28, generally. All counties and portions of counties lying west of Interstate 95.

December 1-February 28, generally. All counties and portions of counties lying east of Interstate 95.

No otter trapping permitted west of the Blue Ridge.

It shall be unlawful to set a trap larger than a standard No. 1½ leghold trap or 5-inch body-gripping trap within 25 feet of an active beaver lodge or dam.

No beaver or otter pelts may be sold, traded or shipped out of state until sealed by an agent of the Commission.

Bobcat

November 15-January 31. No bobcat pelts may be sold, traded or shipped out of state until sealed by an agent of the Commission.

Bag Limit—two per hunting party, taken between noon of one day and noon the following day. The season bag limit shall be six bobcats in the aggregate, taken by hunting and trapping combined.

Fox

November 15-January 31 statewide except: Albemarle, November 1-30; and Nelson, November 1-January 20. Fox trapping is prohibited in Clarke, Fauquier, Goochland, Lee, Loudoun, and Rappahannock counties. No trapping within 50 feet of a highway in Fauquier and Loudoun Counties.

Mink and Muskrat

December 1-February 28, generally. All counties and portions of counties lying west of Interstate 95.

December 15-March 10. All counties and portions of counties lying east of Interstate 95.

Nutria

No hunting with watercraft on Back Bay from October 1-March 31 Unlawful to trap nutria from March 11 through December 14.

Rabbit

May be taken with box traps from *October 15-January 31* provided no traps shall be set on the lands of another without written permission of the landowner.

Raccoon and Opossum

November 15-February 28 east of the Blue Ridge. November 15-January 31 west of the Blue Ridge.

General Regulations

Residents under 16 years of age do not need a license to trap when accompanied by any person 18 years of age or older who possess a valid state license to trap. Trappers using box traps for rabbits do not need a license but permission of the landowner is necessary. County residents 65 years of age and over do not need a license to trap on private property in county of residence. National Forest lands will be open during the regular trapping seasons listed below. Trappers must visit all traps once each day to remove all animals caught therein. Squirrels and bear may not be trapped. Trapping by non-residents is prohibited.

Any person setting or in possession of a steel leghold or body gripping trap or snare shall have it marked by means of a nonferrous metal tag bearing his name and address. This requirement shall not apply to landowners on their own land, nor to a bonafide tenant or lessee within the bounds of land rented or leased by him, nor to anyone transporting any

such trap from its place of purchase.

The use of body gripping traps with a jaw spread in excess of seven and one-half (71) inches is prohibited except when

such traps are covered by water.

It shall be unlawful to set above the ground any bodygripping trap with a jaw spread in excess of five inches, baited with any lure or scent likely to attract a dog.

No deadfalls or snares, except that snares with loops less than 8-inches in diameter with the top of the snare loop not more than 10-inches above the ground may be used.

It shall be unlawful to trap except by Commission permit on the Chickahominy, False Cape State Park, Hog Island, Lands End, Pocahontas-Trojan, Powhatan and Saxis Wildlife Management Areas.

It shall be unlawful to set above the ground any steel leg hold trap with teeth set upon the jaws, or larger than size No. 2, or with a jaw spread exceeding six and one-half inches.

Unlawful to hunt or shoot beaver, mink, muskrat, and

otter except by special permit.

It shall be unlawful to willfully molest, damage or remove any trap, or any lawfully caught bird or animal therefrom, or in any way disturb traps or snares legally set by another

No trapping within 50 feet of a highway in Clarke, Fauquier and Loudoun Counties.

County or city resident to trap in county or city of	
residence \$ 7	7.50
State resident to trap statewide	5.00



APPLICATION FOR REFUGE FUR TRAPPING PERMIT

The permitting of trapping on lands of life Refuge System Administration Actimplemented by regulations in 43 CFR. The application form will be used by lity of each applicant. Routine use disclosures may also be manticipated ligitation; (2) of informule, order or license, to appropriate prosecuting the violation or for endiridual (42 FR 19083* April 11.15	Service personnel to evaluate the qualificat made (1) to the U.S. Department of Justice who mation indicating a violation or potential violation or potential violation or implementing the statute, rule, regresponse to an inquiry from a Congressional of 977). plication form is purely voluntary, but failured	eation Act, 16 U.S.C. 460k-3; ions and conclude the eligibi- en related to litigation or olation of a statute, regulation, responsible for investigating or ulation, order or license; (3) iffice made at the request of that
ge name, address and telepho	ne number:	
	TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT	
NAME		AGE*
applicant must have obtained	the age of majority in the State i	n which trapping will occur.
ADDRESS: STREET/BOX		CITY
STATE	ZIP CODE	TELEPHONE
NAME OF PARTNER (Note: Partnerships must be complete an application)	be authorized by the Refuge Manager ation.)	r, and each partner must
THIS SECTION APPLIES ONLY TO	CERTAIN REFUGES REQUIRING FINANCIA	AL COMMITMENT OR REMITTANCE
Indicate amount of bid or for restrictions on the number special restrictions. See s	ee for each unit or area you wish of units an individual may trap. (pecial conditions.)	to trap. (Note: There may be Certain units may also have
unit/area bid/fee	unit/area bid/fee	unit/area bid/fee
<u> </u>	\$	\$
\$	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
\$	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
\$	\$	<u> </u>
My deposit or payment of \$_check, or bank or postal moyou do not qualify or are r	is enclosed. (Pay oney order payable to "U.S. Fish an not selected, payment will be retur	ment shall be by cashier's d Wildlife Service." If ned.)

TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT

ious trapping experience:	
Species, and estimated number of each, trapper recent 5 years of trapping, e.g. muskrat-200,	ed previously (average per year for most fox-25, etc.):
Trap system (trap types and sets etc.) used	previously:
Location(s) (county and State) and dates of	previous trapping experience:
Please list one person (not related to you a of your trapping experience and qualificationumber).	
you have a current State trapping license for done, please provide license number(s). (Given	the State(s) in which refuge trapping will we State and number.)
te: A State license will be required prior to	issuance of permit.
you have, or can you obtain, the necessary e	quipment specified in the special refuge
ve you participated in any class or other tra	pper orientation or training program?
If so, give date and location	•
selected, are you willing to attend such a p	rogram if required?
certify that I have read and understand the	meneral and specific conditions and regula-
ions contained in the trapping permit and supp	the made in this application are true. COM-
ions contained in the trapping permit and supprovisions. I certify that all of the statement and correct to the best of my knowledge and erstand I may be disqualified if any informations.	and and are made in good faith. I
nderstand I may be disqualified it dily into	Date
ignature of Applicant	
orm 3-2001	To Be Completed by Refuge Manager: ONALIFIED UNQUALIFIED DATE & INITIALS
ate 1978	*Reasons for rating to be attached